



February 11, 2009

To: House Agriculture Committee

RE: HB 445 Montana's Farmer Protection Bill

Timeless Seeds, Inc
P.O. Box 881
Conrad, MT 59425
www.timelessfood.com

Tel 406 278-5722
FAX 406 278-5720

Mr. Chairman and members of House Agriculture Committee:

(On behalf of myself and the 6 employees of Timeless Seeds, Inc. I would like to go on record supporting HB 445.)

I am a third generation Montana farmer and co-founder and manager of Timeless Seeds, Inc. Timeless Seeds is a 20 year old business started by four Montana farmers, headquartered in Conrad, with production facilities in Ulm, near Great Falls. We contract, process, and market specialty grains grown across the state and region, and market them in high value markets both domestically and overseas.

While this bill is titled a "Farmer Protection Bill", in fact it also directly protects independent seed and grain processors and marketers in Montana. Timeless does not intentionally buy or sell patented seed, but we do purchase and process seed from and numerous farmers around the region.

(While one would assume that current law protects both farmers and seed plants from unauthorized trespass by large, often multi-national, corporations who own patented seeds; that current law protects farmers and seed plants from liability from for unknowingly handling patented seed or grain; that current law protects farmers and seed plants from unreasonable legal expense of defending oneself from trespass or unknowingly handing patented seed, that is not the case.) A number of incidences reported by both farmers and fellow seed plant owners across the country indicate neither farmers nor local seed plants are protected in other states.

HB 445 would establish the basic right to do business without undue financial burden and unfair harassment. We strongly support HB 445 as a needed protection for Montana business enterprises.

Sincerely,

David N. Oien, President
Timeless Seeds, Inc.